

CPYRGHT

FOIAb3b

CPYRGHT

Free Cubans Have Merry Day With Kin

By Jim Becker

MIAMI, Dec. 25 (AP)—The survivors of the Bay of Pigs invasion, ransomed from Communist Cuba in the greatest human barter of modern times, spent Christmas in freedom today.

The 1113 men were flown here in a 10-plane, 2-day operation that ended in the waning hours of Christmas Eve. A main feature of Christmas Day was a holiday dinner of "lechón" (roast suckling pig) with loved ones they hadn't seen since the invasion failed 20 months ago.

The 2-day exchange was a mixture of agonized waiting, as the return sputtered fitfully with long delays between planes; of unashamed tears; of husbands introduced to children they had never seen; of emotion-charged reunions with mothers and fathers.

At Homestead Air Force Base, on the outskirts of Miami, the last plane load of prisoners pounded down the ramp to freedom shortly after 9:30 last night.

Invasion Chiefs Arrive

Aboard the craft was a trio of men who led the volunteer brigade of some 2000 in the abortive invasion.

They were Jose Perez San Roman, the military commander; Ancido Oliva, second in command; and Manuel Artime, a member of the Cuban Revolutionary Council.

Also aboard was James B. Donovan, the New York lawyer who negotiated the exchange of the invasion prisoners for

\$53 million worth of medical supplies and baby food.

Donovan carried a pledge from Cuban Premier Fidel Castro, "to discuss the early release of the 23 American prisoners" still in Cuban jails.

The lawyer said he personally had not seen any of the American prisoners "but from Cuban prisoners I heard they are not being more harshly treated than the others."

Donovan left immediately for New York and a family reunion of his own at Lake Placid, N. Y.

One of the returning Cubans said that Castro visited briefly with a group of the prisoners before they left Cuba yesterday and warned them they would be "liquidated" if they returned as aggressors.

"We told him we would come back and that he'd be the one liquidated," said Ulises Carbo, 37.

There was no particular reaction of any kind from Castro to this bit of defiance from the prisoners, Carbo said in an interview.

"He was putting on one of his old shows for us," he added. "He was petulant and distrustful about the shipment of medicine and food that went for our release. He told us 'You are faithful enemies and we'll meet again and when we do there'll be no salvation for you. You'll be liquidated.'"

"But," Carbo went on, "Fidel isn't his old arrogant self. He looked crestfallen."

This exchange with Castro took place at the San Antonio de los Baños airbase, a U. S. built airfield south of Havana now jammed with Russian Migs and other equipment.

Russian technicians in large numbers have given the town of San Antonio such a foreign air, Carbo reported, the people refer to it as "Moscow."

Carbo is the son of Sergio Carbo, editor and publisher of the

shuttered newspaper Prensa Libre of Havana. The younger Carbo was sub-editor of Prensa Libre before Castro ordered it closed in 1960.

"We saw plenty of Migs at San Antonio," the former prisoner said. "I counted 57 of different types. A lot of them were flying. I am certain Castro was putting on a deliberate show of strength for us as well as for that of the Pan American crews who brought us out."